

December 2, 2005

The Honorable Cliff Stearns  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade,  
And Consumer Protection  
2125 Rayburn Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Stearns:

On behalf of the Rose Bowl Management Committee, we thank you for the invitation to testify before your Subcommittee at a hearing entitled "Determining a Champion on the Field: A Comprehensive Review of the BCS and Postseason College Football." Before we address the subject matter of the hearing, we feel it would be beneficial for you to know some of the history of the Rose Bowl, its current status in postseason college football, and its relationships with the Bowl Championship Series ("BCS").

#### HISTORY

The Pasadena Tournament of Roses Association was founded in 1890 by citizens of the City of Pasadena, California, for the purpose of presenting a floral pageantry on New Year's Day in celebration of the beautiful weather in Southern California at that time of the year. Its members are volunteers and currently number 935. The celebration drew instant recognition, and visitors from the colder climates in our country journeyed west in increasing numbers to experience the mild weather

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and participate in the celebration. In fact, because of the influx of citizens from the State of Indiana, Pasadena was often referred to as the "Indiana Colony."

Partly to compliment the floral pageantry and partly to secure financial support for the parade and other activities, the concept of sponsoring a sporting event developed. In 1902, the first postseason college football game in the United States was played at Tournament Park in Pasadena, between the University of Michigan and Stanford University. Subsequent to that game, and partly because of the thrashing of the West Coast representative (49 – 0), other sporting events, such as ostrich races and chariot races, were held in lieu of a football game. In 1916, postseason college football games were once again initiated. In the early 1920's a bowl was constructed in Pasadena, and in 1923 the now famous Rose Bowl hosted its first game, pitting the University of Southern California against Penn State. Since that time 83 consecutive postseason college football games have been played in the Rose Bowl. The forthcoming game, to be played on January 4, 2006, between the No. 1 and No. 2 ranked BCS teams, for the BCS National Championship, will be the 92<sup>nd</sup> Rose Bowl Game.

Until 1946, the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Association selected the participants, which consisted of teams throughout the United States playing a Pacific coast football champion.

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In 1947, a partnership was entered into among the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Association, the Pac-10 Conference, and the Big Ten Conference for hosting the champion of those two Conferences on New Year's Day at the Rose Bowl. Since then, the champions of the Pac-10 and Big Ten Conferences have played in 56 Rose Bowl Games.

Prior to this partnership, the Rose Bowl was never sold out. From 1947 to the present the Rose Bowl has been a contractual sell out every year.

The Rose Bowl is unique in many respects. It is the oldest college football postseason Bowl game in the country. It is also the largest Bowl, with a current attendance approximating 93,000 fans, and, prior to accommodation of the Americans for Disability Act and incorporation of theatre-type seating in a portion of the Bowl in 1999, its seating capacity (and attendance) exceeded 100,000.

The Rose Bowl is also unique in its partnership with the Pac-10 and Big Ten Conferences. No other Bowl has such an arrangement. Since establishment of such partnership, the management of the Game has been undertaken by the Rose Bowl Management Committee consisting of representatives from the three Partners. Because of this partnership arrangement, the Bowl is a contractual sell out every year. Also because of this arrangement, the Rose Bowl Management Committee is not structured to sell tickets to the public.

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The alliance of the Tournament of Roses, the Big Ten Conference and the Pac-10 Conference did not occur by happenstance. The Pac-10 Conference is, of course, in geographic proximity to the Rose Bowl, hence a natural partner. Geography also plays a roll in the Big Ten Conference partnership in the Rose Bowl. There is a strong heritage in Southern California tied to the Midwest. From statistics we have been shown through the years, there are more alumni from Big Ten schools located in the Southern California area than in any other location in the United States. Through the 58 years of our contractual arrangement with the Big Ten, Midwesterners have shown themselves willing to travel to Pasadena to participate in what we refer to as "America's New Year Celebration." Our grandstands are always full, our matchings are always strong, and our television ratings consistently either the highest or among the highest in the country. As a result of all of the above, the Rose Bowl commands the highest broadcasting rights fees of any college football game.

#### RELATIONSHIP OF ROSE BOWL WITH THE BCS

The Rose Bowl Management Committee has no contractual relationship with the BCS. Contrary to popular opinion, the Rose Bowl Game is not a BCS Bowl. The BCS has no power to control the Rose Bowl Game or the Rose Bowl Management Committee. Conversely, the Rose Bowl Management Committee has no power to control the BCS, the BCS Conferences, or the organization and structure

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of the BCS. The Rose Bowl Management Committee has its own broadcasting rights agreement with ABC Sports, separate from the BCS. The Rose Bowl Management Committee believes it is important, and places great value on its efforts, to limit the amount of commercialization permitted in connection with the Rose Bowl Game, and, when played, the BCS National Championship Game. In that regard, the Rose Bowl Management Committee will not allow a title sponsor of the Rose Bowl Game. Distribution of net revenue from each Rose Bowl Game is in accordance with the existing Rose Bowl Agreement (between the Pac-10 and Big Ten Conferences and the Tournament of Roses Association).

The Big Ten Conference and the Pac-10 Conference both are members of the BCS, and, as an accommodation to our Conference Partners who are interested in participating in a plan allowing their champion to play for the National Championship, the Tournament of Roses has entered into a relationship with the BCS, which permits a Big Ten and/or Pac-10 Champion to be released from the Rose Bowl to play in the BCS National Championship Game. In return, the Rose Bowl is designated as the site of the National Championship Game every four years. This relationship has existed since 1998. Assuming the underlying relationships and assumptions of the current structure, rules and policies of the BCS remain substantially the same, the Rose Bowl will continue to release a Pac-10 and/or Big Ten Conference champion to play in a BCS National Championship Game if rated

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one and/or two in the BCS ranking system at the end of each season. In addition to the regular Rose Bowl Games, the Rose Bowl will continue to host the National Championship Game between the No. 1 and No. 2 ranked teams at the end of each season, once every four year cycle.

If the underlying relationship and assumptions regarding our affiliation with the BCS change without the approval of the Rose Bowl Management Committee, the Rose Bowl Management Committee reserves the right to disassociate the Rose Bowl Game from the BCS and to decline to host the BCS National Championship Game.

#### POSTSEASON COLLEGE BOWL GAMES VERSUS A PLAYOFF SYSTEM

We have read the letter proposed to be offered into this Subcommittee's records by the Football Bowl Association. We concur wholeheartedly in the comments made therein. We believe a playoff system with assigned teams would undermine the essence of the Rose Bowl and its business relationships. We believe that any regular change to the Big Ten and Pac-10 Champions participating in the Rose Bowl Game will adversely affect the 117 years of the tradition of the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Association, both in our presenting America's New Year Celebration and in the economic vitality that it brings to the City of Pasadena and the greater Southern California area. We would not support any system that would diminish the prestige and the luster of the Rose Bowl Game or work toward

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elimination of our playing the Conference champions of the Pac-10 and Big Ten on or about New Year's Day in Pasadena, California, each year.

We leave to others the opportunity to comment upon the subject of the mechanics of a playoff system. Suffice it to say that in our view, we cannot envision a playoff system that will not undermine our New Year's tradition.

Attached to the original copy of this letter is a brochure entitled "A Visitor's Guide to America's New Year Celebration" describing the events and activities that surround the forthcoming BCS National Championship Game. We are dedicated to preserve the tradition of the celebration.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our comments at this hearing. We hope that each of you will be able to experience what millions of Americans have experienced, and participate in America's New Year Celebration with us in Pasadena, California.

Respectfully submitted,

William S. Johnstone, Jr.  
Chairman  
Rose Bowl Management Committee